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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of

LESTER F. LUDWIG

Appln. No.: 09/471,577

Filed: December 23, 1999

For: MULTIMEDIA SERVICES USING CENTRAL OFFICE



Group Art Unit: 2743

Examiner: G. Eng

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2643

TC 2700 MAIL ROOM

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SUPPLEMENTAL RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

TC 1700 MAIL ROOM

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In a paper filed on September 25, 2000, Applicant elected Group 1 (claims 1-3) for prosecution on the merits with traverse. Applicant advised that he will supplement this election with reasons for traverse in a further paper.

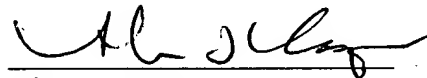
Those reasons are now being submitted. Specifically, the elected claims (including independent claim 1) are directed to a system for providing video communication services to one or more premises, which includes three basic components including (a) first premises network connected to (b) a plurality of user workstations which have video and audio capture and reproduction capabilities etc. and (c) a multimedia central office for transceiving audio, video and digital signals. Independent claims 4, 8, 13 and 14 that define the three other groups have the same limitations. The groups are distinguished by certain supplemental features of the commonly claimed central office (CO), but those differences would be necessarily be covered in any search performed for the common features of the invention. Specifically, claim 1 adds the feature of the CO combining video images in a mosaic image at one workstation, while claim 4 calls for the CO causing storage of audio and/or video at a workstation and Claim 8 specifies that the CO is configured to process a call so that users participate to the extent of their capability. Claim 13 specifies that the CO can notify a busy user of a call and optionally accept it, while claim 14 gives the CO the ability to associate a user with a workstation at which he is logged-in.

On the basis of the common structures in limitations (a)-(c) of all the claims, the field of search for the claims is identical, as common classes and subclasses must be searched to ensure proper examination. Any differences are focused on the capability of the central office, and many of those differences are related. For example, where the CO processes calls for different user capability, combines callers into a mosaic, or stores a multimedia document, the field of search would overlap because the focus of the search is on CO capability. Each reference related to one of these features would necessarily be reviewed for other of these capabilities as well.

Moreover, many of the claims dependent from each independent claim include the supplemental features of the other independent claims. The search, if properly conducted, should not be limited to the subject matter of only the elected independent claim, but should include the features of the dependent claims as well. Thus, the field and content of the search for all of the claims would overlap.

For the sake of examining economy, and in order to conduct an efficient and comprehensive search and examination, Applicant respectfully submits that the restriction is in error and that one or more of the non-elected groups should be searched and examined concurrently with the elected group 1.

Respectfully submitted,



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